THE New Republic

Justice Reed's Retirement—
Alexander Bickel

Page 6

THE EDUCATION OF THE GIFTED CHILD

"There Is Such A Thing As Equal Denial Of Opportunity"

By ARTHUR BESTOR

British Intellectuals On Strike . . . . *Hugh Massingham*

It Better Be Good . . . . . *Gerald W. Johnson*

Roosevelt Up To 1933 . . . . . *Richard Strout*

MARCH 4, 1957

25c

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Washington Wire

The Foxes and the Chickens

WE HAVE ACHED for months to devote a whole column to the federal regulatory commissions. These are the seemingly dull, faceless agencies that protect the consumer. They are the anonymous fourth branch of government which regulates your life and mine in ways past imagining—the kind of radio program you get, the kind of protection you get on the stock market, the degree of monopoly permitted to the men who sell you goods.

As Voltaire did *not* say, "I care not who makes the law so long as I pick the regulatory commission that enforces it!" The type of man selected is likely to have more to do with the result than any legislation Congress passes.

There is a sullen feeling now in the business community that Eisenhower is too "radical"—that he has gone over to the New Deal! It shows how naïve American business really is. These commissions in Washington have been carefully, steadily and methodically stacked against the consumer interest and for the business interest since Eisenhower took office. The result sets the tone of Washington as much as any other one thing. We doubt if Eisenhower knows how far the process has gone. His subordinates pick the men, he names them, the conservative coalition in Congress confirms them, and that is that.

There are eight main regulatory commissions with 50 members and a dozen minor cases. Regarding the Big Eight the *Congressional Quarterly* made an interesting discovery a year ago. The tradition of reappointing commissioners whose terms expire, it announced, had been "broken." Not one single commissioner first named by a prior Administration had Eisenhower reappointed! At that time he had filled 27 of the 50 posts. In the Big Eight we can find only one reappointment—Chairman William Martin of the Federal Reserve Board, leading exponent of the tight money policy.

At his press conference January 30, Eisenhower said he knew nothing about the forthcoming vacancy on the three-man TVA. Commissioner Curtis' term expires May 18. "You have given me my first intimation of it," the innocent President said. Yet on a desk in the White House is a dossier an inch thick of possible replacements to this crucial post. Eisenhower named General Herbert Vogel to replace Gordon Clapp in 1954 after consumers' champion Clapp opposed the Dixon-Yates grab. But Vogel has been constantly out-voted by colleagues Curtis and Paty. Now he will boss the show after May 18 if and when Curtis leaves. The whole direction of future TVA policy hinges on it.

Almost certainly the President does not bother about these things. That was Harry Cain's experience when he tried to take his fight from the Subversive Activities Control Board to the White House. He never got past Sherman Adams until he made a national outcry and then, of course, was dropped.

Take another pending vacancy. Thomas Murray's term on the Atomic Energy Commission expires June 30. He is the sole Truman dissenter left. The AEC has been dragged into politics, involved in the Dixon-Yates case, and made the exponent of private industry control of atomic energy by Admiral Strauss, the chairman. You will see Murray's head roll soon.

Eisenhower's Genius

IT WOULD TAKE too long to list all the cases—but the fact is, Eisenhower has shown a genius for naming men to regulatory commissions whose antecedents indicated their hostility to the goals professed. The steady process of purging liberals and the consumer-minded has never stopped. Some appointments are shocking.

Albert Cole as a Kansas Congressman was an arch foe of public housing; he was made administrator of the housing agency.

Ex-Congressman Joseph Talbot was a Taft Republican who voted against the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act; he was put on the Tariff Commission.

For 20 years Edward Howrey was a leading lobbyist before the Federal Trade Commission for clients accused of antitrust violations. He was made chairman of the FTC. (He has since resigned; his work, as he said, "completed.")

And so on . . . Chairman Jerome Kuykendall of the Federal Power Commission was originally a lawyer for gas utilities in rate cases; ex-Chairman Guy Farmer of the Labor Relations Board previously was an advisor of management; Chairman George McConnaughey of the FCC (whose authority includes long-distance telephone rates) was a Bell System lawyer.

Your eye will not pick out a single distinguished advocate of the consumers' interest on the list of Eisenhower commission appointees. Roosevelt at one time or another had William O. Douglas, Ferdinand Pecora, Joseph Kennedy, Jerome Frank, James Landis, Sumner Pike and Leon Henderson on the crucial Securities and Exchange Commission. Who is there now? Senator Lehman protested in 1955 that Eisenhower had replaced all five sitting members of the SEC with men representing the industry they were supposed to regulate.

Bipartisan Boards

SOME OF these commissions are required by law to be bipartisan. Eisenhower has taken to picking "Eisenhower-Democrats" to meet this condition. The Republican National Committee admittedly cleared Harold Patterson picked to fill a Democratic vacancy on the SEC. Again, Miami corporation lawyer Louis Hector, a registered "Democrat" who voted for Eisenhower in 1952 and 1956, last month went on the Civil Aeronautics Board. (He replaced Joseph Adams, an outstanding liberal, who made a spectacular fight for consumers.)

These individual appointments are too inconspicuous for the public to sense their meaning. Now and then one creates something of a stir—like the failure to reappoint Gordon Clapp, ex-Senator James Mead (FTC), Frieda Hennock (FCC) or the like—but only rarely. Yet nothing like this mass exodus and subsequent upheaval has occurred in a generation. Now Rep. Oren Harris (D, Ark.), chairman of the House Commerce Committee, plans an investigation. We can tell him right now that it is here—here—that the foxes are being let in to guard the chickens.

T.R.B.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The New Republic

A JOURNAL OF OPINION

MARCH 4, 1957

THE WEEK 3
The US and France; India's Experiment; The Italian Socialists; Soft-Cover Book Reviews; Reading Cripples

ARTICLES 6
On the Retirement of Justice Reed by Alexander M. Bickel
The Superficial Aspect by Gerald W. Johnson
British Intellectuals on Strike by Hugh Massingham
Educating the Gifted Child by Arthur Bestor

BOOKS AND COMMENT 17
Reviews: *The Age of Roosevelt—The Crisis of the Old Order; Strangers in Our Fields; Brothers and Sisters*

PAPERBACK BOOKS 21

MOVIES 22

VOL. 136, NO. 9, ISSUE 2205

Correspondence

► *Is Israel a Mistake?*

APPARENTLY, Reinhold Niebuhr ("Our Stake in Israel," *NR*, February 4) has not assimilated a platitude common to all theologies. Let him apply the Golden Rule to the problem of Israel *from the Moslem viewpoint*, from Israel's Palestinian victims. . . . Israel's chief grace in Dr. Niebuhr's eyes is technological know-how and its influence upon the Moslem world, as if modern gadgetry is the Divine in man. Is this the motivating standards in our theological schools Niebuhr represents? If the more abundant life is predicated upon might is right, then we should fearfully contemplate our advanced ethical conceptions!

Niebuhr writes that "the location of the state of Israel may have been a mistake; though the confluence of historical forces made it unavoidable." What glib hypocrisy! Consider the tragic stories

(*Continued on page 23*)

The US and France

GUY MOLLET, Premier of France, visits the White House not merely to pay a courtesy call or to patch up a riff with Mr. Eisenhower but to talk about basic differences of opinion. These differences between our government and the French have grown, not shrunk, in recent months.

The first of them is colonialism. The French Government, as most Americans see it, has waged a futile, costly fight against freedom for its overseas territories since 1945, first in Indo-China, then in Tunisia and Morocco, now in Algeria. Half a million French soldiers are pinned down by the Algerian rebellion at a cost of several million dollars a day. The French have offered the Algerians a cease-fire, free elections, political negotiations with the new legislators, but no independence. And this was no doubt in the mind of Vice President Nixon when he declared last November that the US should assert its independence of British-French policies.

But although we have let the French know that we oppose "colonialism," we have left many doubts about what we are for. President Cornelis De Kiewiet of the University of Rochester recently said that Americans "have often been falsely taught that American independence was the outcome of a war and a declaration of independence. Superficially this is so. More profoundly this country was able to make its declaration of independence meaningful because it had the skills and experience . . . the lawyers, bankers, farmers, teachers, merchants who could successfully carry on the affairs of a modern state. This is the part of our own history which we must invoke when we address ourselves to issues of independence and emancipation in Asia and especially in Africa."

If our proper goal, then, is not merely an end of a colonial rebellion but the creation of a viable state, able to govern itself and conduct peaceful relations with its neighbors, there is some chance for a French-American understanding on Algeria and other dependent territories. But to reach an understanding Mr. Eisenhower will have to put forward a realistic policy, pointing the way toward self-determination in due course, yet safeguarding European lives and property as well.

If Mr. Eisenhower and M. Mollet can make but a start in solving the fundamental issue of colonialism, the same is true of the financial pinch which grips France. The French ended 1956 with a trade deficit of almost a billion dollars. The closing of Suez and the rising price of American petroleum represent one cause. The Algerian rebellion is another. And the failure of the French Government to tighten up on imports is a third.

Mr. Eisenhower's authority to make financial commitments to France is minimal. France has a loan quota of $525 million at the International Monetary Fund, against which she has borrowed $40 million. With American support, she could get authorization for a further drawing of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about $200 million. Any additional American help would be up to Congress.

Ultimately, the solution to the financial crisis lies not in loans and aid, but in reopening Suez. And the reopening of Suez is dependent on American leadership. Hence the real understanding which M. Mollet seeks is assurance that America's newly-won prestige in the Middle East will be used now—without delay—to effect a settlement.

India's Experiment

PRIME MINISTER NEHRU'S government hails the Indian election now underway as "a great experiment in democracy"—and it undoubtedly is. For size alone there has never been a free election quite like it: 100 million out of 193 million eligible voters expected to go to the polls; three million ballot boxes, 10,000 candidates. But the experiment is not simply whether a vast, predominantly illiterate nation can meet the staggering mechanical requirements of representative institutions. That has already been settled in the first Indian election in 1952. What the people of India are testing is whether "democracy" can exist without the more or less evenly balanced contest between parties.

It is certainly no conventional election when ranking opposition leaders not only concede defeat in advance, but actually imply, as did a Socialist leader, that the Congress Party should arrange the victory of enough opposition deputies to keep up democratic appearances. In most newly-independent Asian states the party of the freedom movement was by its very nature a national umbrella for divergent economic and social interests. Once in power the party could with some justice claim to be the custodian of national unity and progress, even though a multi-party political system was enshrined in new constitutions. Nehru's great personal stature enhanced his attractive power in the case of the Congress Party, and as a result telling opposition to Congress, the symbol of nationalism, comes more from parochial local candidates than from organized national parties.

And yet vocal, if minority, opposition can have an influence entirely out of proportion to the opposition's size, as we witnessed in the UN debate on Hungary, when the Indian Socialist outcry against Krishna Menon contributed materially to Nehru's about-face. Moreover, it is precisely among those Indians most outspokenly critical of totalitarian tendencies in the Congress that the very idea of party politics is being questioned in searching intellectual terms. Latter-day Gandhian ideologians, such as Vinoba Bhave of the land-gift movement, maintain that in the West "51 percent dictate to 49 percent," and that it is for India to find a way for the 51 percent and 49 percent to come to agreed terms. To the Western observer this suggests some form of strong arm authority. But it would be brash indeed to conclude from the vantage point of one culture that a one-party democracy—if it does come to that in India (a big if)—cannot be "democracy" in the context of another quite different culture.

The Italian Socialists

THE RUSSIANS have not yet paid the full price for their intervention in Hungary, but the bills are already being added up and delivered to the Kremlin. The latest and most serious item in the account comes from Italy where the Communist Party, after losing 881,000 members since last year, has been abandoned by the Nenni Socialists, its faithful ally for a decade. If Nenni and the anti-Communist Socialist Party of Saragat can now combine to form one Socialist Movement, the Communists are bound to become weaker still.

Whether Nenni and Saragat will succeed in coming to an agreement is another matter. "The path to Socialist unity," decided Nenni's followers at their annual conference in Venice, "is open. The common front (with the Communists) is neither possible any longer nor useful in view of the new prospects for Socialism." Signor Nenni, in fact, now finally accepts democracy; he renounces revolution by violence and accepts the policy of the gradual seizure of power by the Parliamentary method. But there are other parts of the declaration that are not so satisfactory. The Nenni Socialists have broken only politically with the Communists; apart from that, they want no anti-Communist crusade and are anxious to continue their collaboration with the Communists in the trade union federation. How they can be enemies in one field and friends in another is not at all clear.

It is certainly not clear to Signor Saragat who has already contemptuously dismissed Nenni as a man who "does not believe in principles." In his view there has been no real change of heart in the Nenni Party: on the contrary, the closing stages of the Venice conference showed that 70 percent of Nenni's followers are "orient-

THE NEW REPUBLIC

1244 NINETEENTH ST. N.W., WASHINGTON 6, D. C.

GILBERT A. HARRISON, *Editor and Publisher*

MICHAEL STRAIGHT, *Editor-at-Large*

HELEN FULLER, *Managing Editor*

Robert Evett, *Book Editor* — Selig S. Harrison, *Assoc. Editor*

Donald Malcolm, *Staff Writer* — Irvin Shapiro, *Design*

Lucille Davis, *Copy Asst.* — F. R. Ruskin, *Admin. Asst.*

Published weekly and Copyrighted, 1957 in the USA by The New Republic, Inc., and distributed to newsstands by the Eastern News Company. Phone: REpublic 7-8656. Entered as second-class matter September 26, 1950, at the post office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Single copy, 25c; Yearly subscription, $7.00; Foreign, $8.00; Armed Forces personnel or students, $5.00. Subscribers desiring change of address should notify us at least three weeks in advance. Please include both old and new addresses.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ated or definitely anchored to philo-Communist positions." These secret anti-democratic feelings have come to the surface only just in time. "One has only to think," Signor Saragat goes on, "what might have happened if, in the absence of the present indications (of the Nenni party's real views) which disperse all deceptions, the flowery cloak of Nennian eloquence had been able to hide the reality. Socialist reunifications would have taken place in conditions which would have represented a real and complete absorption of a democratic Socialist Party such as ours into a party of prevalently totalitarian tendencies."

Even Nenni himself is in difficulties. When his followers ended the Communist alliance it seemed that he was in full control of his party and would be able to lead them wherever he chose. His triumph, however, lasted precisely 24 hours, since in the voting for the new Central Committee his supporters managed to get only 33 percent of the seats. This is not quite so bad as it looks because one of the groups that emerged in the election seems to be an alliance of officials who are alarmed lest they should lose their jobs if there were a merger with the Saragat Socialists. If Nenni can somehow reassure them, he may still be able to maintain his authority over the Party.

But we should not pay too much attention to the two leading figures in this complicated situation. Whether Nenni is sincere or not in his anti-Communist protestations is only of secondary importance: what matters is that he was forced to break with his old allies by pressure from below. If he had not repudiated his pact with the Communists, his supporters would have repudiated him or left the party in droves. The fact is that the rank-and-file in both Socialist parties are now anti-Communist and are longing for the day when there will be one Socialist Movement.

Soft-Cover Book Reviews

WHEN the quality paperback books achieved their first startling success several years ago, it was generally thought, even among publishers, that this success would be short-lived. Instead of which, sales have risen steeply: from 2.8 million copies in 1954 to 4.7 million copies in 1955, and rising again to an appreciably higher but still undetermined figure in 1956. Although much has been written about the new soft-cover books, taken collectively, as a surprising and profitable venture in publishing, very little has been written about individual titles. The reasons are simple enough. First, most of the paperbacks are reissues of books that have already appeared in hard covers (although more and more original works are appearing in this form) and second, they are rarely advertised, and consequently bring little revenue to reviewing journals.

This lack of critical attention has not greatly hindered sales, as the figures quoted above sufficiently prove. But as more and more publishers issue more and more books, it becomes increasingly difficult for the general reader to keep himself informed. *The New Republic* is therefore planning to publish, once a month, a critical review of current paperback titles, the first of which appears this week.

Reading Cripples

ONE BY ONE the arguments of Southern Whites against school integration are being disproved in the border states. Widespread rioting and immorality, which many Southerners predicted, have not come about. And now we have the results of an experiment which indicates that the learner's gap between Negro and white students in integrated schools need not be a permanent problem.

A learning gap has long been recognized between Negro and white pupils attending separate schools in the same community. In Virginia, for example, national tests showed an average difference of 2.5 school years in school achievement between Negro and white pupils above the fourth grade. Southerners have argued that this was due to "low mental ability" of Negroes, hence integration was undesirable.

A test which the District of Columbia public school system conducted last year demonstrates that the charge is unfounded. Following a "4-track high-school plan" in its integrated schools, District students were allowed to pursue one of four different courses of study according to their abilities. The slow learners, all deficient in basic reading and arithmetic, were assigned remedial courses. After four months under the new system the District announced its first checkup on 214 tenth graders, all "slow learners," 70 percent of them Negroes. Of the group 75 improved their reading level from three to five school grades in one semester; 79 gained one to two grades; 47 improved up to one grade, and only 12 showed no improvement. Even greater spurts were reported in arithmetic, with 44 percent of the retarded pupils advancing two to five school grades. Rivalry between white and Negro pupils was one of the stimulants.

In a parallel development the Defense Department has announced remedial work in reading for Army, Navy and Air Force officers. More than 5,000 officers classified as "slow readers" were sent to school 30 hours, one hour a day. The average officer entered the class reading 250-290 words a minute, and emerged six weeks later with a speed of 500-600 words, without decline in comprehension.

Slow readers among military officers and among Negro pupils in integrated schools are both victims of mediocre instruction in the lowest grades. We are, as former Sen. William Benton has said, "a nation of reading cripples," and race is not the reason.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

On the Retirement of Justice Reed

by ALEXANDER M. BICKEL

A CHANGE in the membership of the Supreme Court, such as was signalled by the retirement on February 25 of Mr. Justice Stanley F. Reed, which followed so shortly upon that of Mr. Justice Sherman Minton last October, normally lacks the drama that attends departures and arrivals elsewhere in the federal government. But it never fails to draw a characteristic public response compounded of several elements. There is the mood of mellow reflection about the past of the Republic and about the abiding nature of change; there is the attempt at a sweeping estimate of the departing Justice's performance; and there is the effort to define the qualifications needed in his successor. Each of these elements will bear analysis, since each speaks loudly of silent premises concerning the nature of the Court and of the Constitution for which it stands. Such analysis can be particularly fruitful now, when the country is digesting the Court's momentous segregation decisions, and when so much is said about the Court that proceeds either from malice, or misunderstanding, or both.

The usual lack of drama distinguishing the departure of Justices from that of captains and of kings is quite justified. For no two or three changes on the Court, not even if they include the advent of a new Chief Justice, are likely to be as immediately momentous as a turnover at the head of one of the great executive departments, or in the chairmanship of a major committee of the Senate, or, of course, in the Presidency. In the immediate aspect, it is no use having expectations of great new things; whether nervous or sanguine, such expectations are likely to be ill-founded. To the extent that they are instruments of decisive change, Justices are time-bombs, not warheads that explode on impact.

There are exceptions to be sure. In 1870, President Grant made two appointments which promptly resulted in the reversal of a quite crucial recent decision concerning the monetary powers of the federal government. And it may seem that strong new doctrine became ascendant soon after the first of President Franklin Roosevelt's appointees, Mr. Justice Black, burst forth in the pages of the Reports in a *shower* of passionate *italics*. (Mr. Justice Black's passion and power have lost little with the years, although his printed word has subsided into the composure of roman type, suffering thereby no diminution of eloquence.) But, on the whole, the movements of the Court are not sudden, and not suddenly affected by new appointments.

The fact that the Court's members personify continuity strikes the public consciousness, I think, whenever one of them retires, and accounts for the tendency toward the reflective mood I have mentioned. Mr. Justice Minton was a fire-eating New Deal Senator, and when he left the Court, men remembered no doubt his stance in the thirties, and thought perhaps a little self-deprecatingly of the emotions it had aroused. Mr. Justice Reed, as Solicitor General of the United States some 20-odd years ago, argued a number of celebrated New Deal cases. His was the second of President Franklin Roosevelt's appointments, and he sat with Hughes and Brandeis and McReynolds. When McReynolds went in 1941, a remembrance of the Wilson era and of trust-busting in the early 1900's went with him. Justice Van Devanter, who retired in 1937, had been appointed by Taft, whose friend and judicial "mainstay" he was; and he had sat with appointees of McKinley and of Cleveland before him. And so the human chain goes back, unbroken in a small, intimate group to the earliest beginnings.

Senior members of the Court are witnesses to the reality and validity of our present—distracted, improbable, illegitimate as it often appears—because in their persons they assure us of its link to the past, always the securer past, which they also witnessed, and in which they were themselves once the harbingers of something outrageously new. This is so not only of those who are constructive and creative; it is true of Justices who oppose all that is not as they knew it; it is true despite their cries of outrage, despite the angry maledictions of a McReynolds. Say what they will, their very existence among us reassures us. When the great Holmes, who had fought at Bull Run, retired in 1932 at the age of 90, the emotional public response was not due wholly to his undoubted greatness. It was also that his years, his years alone, fulfilled one of the functions of the Supreme Court.

Thus the bitter-sweet feeling which is one of the features of the reception we customarily accord to news of a senior Justice's retirement is grounded in a sound

---

ALEXANDER M. BICKEL, *a former clerk to Mr. Justice Frankfurter, is an Associate Professor at Yale University School of Law.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

instinct for the role played by the Supreme Court in our national life. The melancholy fact, however, is that the same cannot be said for many seemingly authoritative attempts to characterize the departing Justice's contribution and to suggest the requirements of the office. Consider as an example two columns of comment on the Reed retirement by Arthur Krock in the *New York Times* of Sunday, February 3. It is not unfair to pick on Mr. Krock, since his work appears in the good, grey *Times*, and he is grey with years of punditry and recognition.

DURING the 19 years of Mr. Justice Reed's tenure, Mr. Krock tells us, the Supreme Court underwent three phases: "from conservative to radical, from radical to moderate and from moderate to radical again." Justice Reed himself was, throughout, a "moderate progressive"; a term, Mr. Krock concedes, which "like the other labels above it reflects an oversimplification"; but a term applicable nonetheless. I don't want to put too fine a point on it, but Mr. Krock's comments would not have been very much less meaningful if he had written that for the past 19 years the Court had gone from soprano to basso, from basso to tenor and from tenor to basso again, and that Mr. Justice Reed, on the whole, had been a mezzo-soprano, though to call him that is to indulge in somewhat of an oversimplification.

This is demonstrable on the face of Mr. Krock's article. The Court was being conservative when it construed the Due Process and Commerce Clauses of the Constitution as forbidding certain measures of social and economic regulation enacted by the Congress and by various state legislatures. Mr. Justice Reed's "moderate progressivism" would have none of this. His construction of the Constitution made room for this legislation. But the "judge-made amendments of the Constitution implicit in the opinions of Black, Felix Frankfurter, William O. Douglas and Frank Murphy" (Ah, the radicals!) were too much for him, and he dissented, except that he went along in the segregation cases.

One concludes that "conservatives" tolerate no "judge-made" amendments to the Constitution, moderates insist on some mild ones but reject others, and radicals just go on writing them all the time. Tax and tax, spend and spend, amend and amend. This must be so since, as Mr. Krock notes, Van Devanter and Sutherland and McReynolds of the old Court thought, or would have thought, that Reed himself was amending the Constitution when he accommodates the New Deal, and when he held all-white primaries unconstitutional.

Without for a moment suggesting that his is a closely-reasoned, self-consistent article, I think it fair to deduce from it that Mr. Krock believes that the Constitution embodies a clear and certain yardstick by which to measure the actions of the legislative and executive branches of the government. The ideal function of a Justice of the Supreme Court is the impersonal application of the yardstick to such actions as are duly brought to his attention. The only qualification he is required to bring to the task is a lawyer's skill. For Mr. Krock, such a constitutional phrase as "due process of law" is very much like the language in a deed, let us say, giving one title to land "in fee simple": it takes a lawyer to tell one just exactly what such fine print means; but a good lawyer can tell you, and that is that.

From this engagingly idyllic conception, everything follows. The Constitution, being very old, is naturally a conservative document; that is to say, conservative in the sense in which the word is used to describe the position of men in American political life; it is wary of Big Labor, inhospitable to social and economic experimentations, attached to existing racial practices, suspicious of foreign creeds, favorably inclined toward a balanced budget and a sound dollar, and probably ill-disposed toward dealings with Red China; conservative in the tradition of Harry Flood Byrd and Herbert Hoover, with perhaps a touch of moderation à la Bernard Baruch. To be construed so as to achieve such conservative results, as for a day it was, the Constitution need not be amended. It need only be honestly read by a lawyer, in Mr. Krock's phrase, "of deep experience." Mr. Krock's "radicals," being intent on achieving what, again in common political parlance, are radical results, have to amend. To be sure, the lawyers of deep experience made things a little sticky during the depression, and wise "moderate progressives," having regard for the unrest of the people, were unfortunately constrained to go ahead and cut a few corners. But that was a crash program, and it is no excuse for going on in the same fashion now.

ACTUALLY, it should come as no novel revelation that the Constitution's major provisions do not embody certain and immutable yardsticks, nor what Mr. Krock would call conservative or radical views, but rather large philosophical concepts which must in each generation be given a content accommodating both our traditions and our felt needs. Such a provision as that of the 5th and 14th Amendments prohibiting deprivations of life, liberty or property without due process of law is no more than an admonition to us that we give due weight to notions of fairness and justice. It is informed, certainly, by the history of the race, but it embodies no immutable, precise standards. It invites judgment born of a complex philosophy of life and of government, not the mechanical application of rules learned in law school. It requires us to sit back and to take a larger, longer view of our doings; it asks us to judge ourselves *sub specie aeternitatis*.

All actions of government have, of course, two aspects: their immediate, necessarily intended practical effects, and their perhaps unintended or unappreciated bearing on enduring values, which are of more than "temporal" interest. Thus a tax imposed by a state on interstate

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trucks, or a federal statute regulating traffic in gambling machines may be very desirable measures in the immediate aspect; but they may also be seen as damaging the fabric of a federalism for which the Commerce Clause of the Constitution, by the same sort of general admonition as is embodied in the Due Process Clause, enjoins respect. Or the conviction of a man plainly guilty of a heinous crime may be approved by all right-thinking people, but the way in which it was obtained may be thought to augur ill for the time-honored liberties of all citizens, guilty and innocent alike.

MEN in all walks of public life are able from time to time to perceive the second aspect of public questions, to which I have referred. Sometimes they are able to base their decisions on it; that is one of the things we like to call acting on principle. Often they do not, however, and often perhaps they should not, for it is fitting that somewhere in government the electorate's will concerning immediate results should be unambiguously heard. But it is quite beneficial also to have an institution which stands aside from the current clash of interests, and which, insofar as is humanly possible, sees only the second aspect, and is concerned only with principle. As our system has evolved, we give that task to a body of nine men, appointed rather than elected, and afforded the extraordinary insulation of life-tenure. If they do their jobs, it is meaningless to characterize their views in terms of the political market-place, as conservative or radical or moderate. The immediate results from which these adjectives derive their significance cannot properly be what the Court had in mind. To use these adjectives is to say, as do the Southerners who call the Court's segregation opinions "politics" and other bad names, that the Justices are simply a body of electorally irresponsible politicians inexcusably endowed with a veto power over the actions of other politicians, who are responsible to the voters.

Mr. Krock implies as much, and he disapproves. But there is a school of professional commentators who say what Mr. Krock implies, and who say it cheerfully, at least when results are reached which they like. Mr. Krock, I suppose, would call them radicals; they call themselves realists. They would relish being Mr. Krock's bedfellows no more than Mr. Krock would like to be theirs, but they have a lot in common with him, being bound to him by the iron hoops of those adjectives—conservative, radical, moderate—that they also apply to members of the Court. The realists are aware of the difference between the Due Process Clause and deeds and leases and the like. They have not Mr. Krock's illusion. They do not regard the Constitution as a clear and certain document written in early law-French, which can be translated clearly and certainly by good lawyers. But this does not greatly distinguish their conception of the Court from Mr. Krock's. For they will not see that the Constitution can be the vehicle for a rational philosophy which causes the Court to intervene only when the actions of other branches of the government threaten what the judges deem to be ultimate values. The realists see in the Constitution a mandate to the judges to achieve such immediate results as they like, and they take a dim view of those judges who hesitate to act in behalf of the liberal cause of the moment as if they had about 50 votes apiece in the House of Representatives. The realists call such judges what Mr. Krock calls them: conservative; and they add such choice terms as legalistic, technical and unrealistic, if, going on his past record, they feel that the judge in question should have come out on the liberal side.

I do not mean to suggest that there have not been Justices who have endeavored to perform as Mr. Krock thinks they should, or as the realists do. But these have been the unimportant figures. Most have tried to act, as it was given to them to see the light, in accordance with their deepest insights into the purposes of our life as a nation and into the nature and proper ends of our government. They have tried not to do over again the responsible work of legislatures; they have tried to stand aside from party politics and from the urgencies of material interests and the exigencies of practical affairs, which tend to narrow men's understanding of what is properly permanent. And they deserve to be judged as they worked. They deserve to have us examine the coherence and worth of their philosophy, their acuity in applying it, their fidelity to it. We may say that their values were shallow and unimportant, because they connected with tradition on the surface only and touched contemporary reality in the same way. Or we may say of others that their ideas had deep roots, grandeur, and the endurance to last. But we should not impose on them what amounts to party affiliation: Mr. Krock's, or the realists'.

NOT ONLY are past Justices entitled to have their performances evaluated in these terms, but we are ourselves entitled to have candidates for the office evaluated by the appointing power and by the public in the same way. That is not easy, since men develop many of their views on the Court itself. But we can know at least what qualities are relevant. They are those of the reflective student, the reflective statesman, the reflective practicing lawyer; in any event, the man of a philosophical bent. It is not encouraging, therefore, when the President, as he has done several times including quite recently, declares with an air of doing the right and proper thing that he will appoint only sitting lower-court judges or leading practicing lawyers. This causes the realists to suffer great distress, for they see the coming of more "legalists" and "technicians." That should not disturb us. Yet, without casting any reflection on the appointments the President has made so far, it is difficult to take heart from his attitude. For, while he avoids the "realist" fallacy, he sounds very much like Mr. Krock.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Superficial Aspect

It Had Better Be Good

AS THESE words are written the jam into which we have worked ourselves in the Middle East seems to be so critical that silence is imposed upon the most doubtful. There is nothing to do now but support the President and the Secretary of State in anything they do, short of rank insanity. All parties to the dispute should be given to understand that, whatever may be our differences among ourselves, we are prepared to prove that the official utterances of the United States are not idle words, even when the policy they announce seems less than ideal.

However, judgment is merely reserved, not yielded. At the proper time an accounting will be exacted. If the present negotiations are conducted with skill and success, the accounting may be little more than a formality; otherwise, it will be serious indeed.

The completely committed Zionists in this country are a small minority—highly vocal, to be sure, but not numerous. At present, however, the merits and demerits of Zionism are irrelevant.

The relevant facts are that Israel is a civilized country, friendly to the United States, and firmly committed to the Western ideal of political liberty. It is facing a coalition of backward countries with nothing but contempt for our way of life, and incited to hostility by the great power that is our avowed enemy and the only serious threat to our national survival.

The complicated diplomacy of the past four years has now placed us in such a position that many foreign observers are drawing inferences extremely embarrassing to us. With apparent justification they have decided that we are allowing ourselves to be used as a catspaw by the Arabs and the Communists, in their scheme to eliminate Israel.

This is an intolerable position for a great, independent nation, and the diplomacy that has led us into it certainly cannot be described as brilliant.

It is an utterly false position. No rational man will accuse Mr. Dulles of deliberately contriving to make the United States the ally of slave-traders and Communists, even in the superficial aspect, much less in solid reality. It appears that he has simply been out-maneuvered, at least so far.

It is conceivable that this is a deceptive appearance. It is conceivable that by some brilliant stroke within the next few days Mr. Dulles will retrieve the position, restore the true relations and leave his antagonists baffled and humiliated. It is conceivable, but do you really believe it?

His critics, in fairness, must give him time. More, they must be prepared, if he pulls it off, to offer him abject apologies, perhaps even to accept Eisenhower's estimate of him as the greatest Secretary of State in history.

But, so much being stipulated, his critics will have a right to demand his resignation if he doesn't pull it off. This has no reference to the Zionists. Non-Jewish America has no intention of being caught aiding and abetting the destruction of any liberty-loving nation, Israel included. We have no taste for even appearing to countenance such a crime. So diplomacy that ends by putting us in such a position that the scornful can accuse us of intriguing with the criminals is appallingly incompetent diplomacy; and in the present state of the world there is no nation which can afford to tolerate incompetent diplomacy.

The President has given the wild turkeys of Georgia a reprieve by hastening back to Washington. Evidently he has at last awakened to the seriousness of the situation. The country is relieved, for during the war he gained a reputation as a master-hand at composing disputes and pouring oil on troubled waters. He will need all his skill and ingenuity to straighten out this mess with credit to the United States.

But even if he succeeds, he will be asked some questions, and if he doesn't succeed the questions will become very searching indeed. The direction in which Mr. Dulles' diplomacy was taking us has been apparent to acute observers for a long time and their objections have been strong. But hitherto the President has met them with resentment.

VERY WELL. If the fat is now in the fire, the blistering will not be monopolized by Dulles; the man who put him in office and kept him in office in the face of mounting criticism cannot escape his share. The Secretary of State is an agent of the President, and the principal is responsible for the acts of his agent. If the present snarl eventuates in anything short of a brilliant, unmistakable triumph of the Administration, responsibility for getting us into the snarl will remain a heavy burden, which cannot be loaded entirely on the shoulders of the Secretary of State.

GERALD W. JOHNSON

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

British Intellectuals on Strike

by HUGH MASSINGHAM

"SOCIALISM and the Intellectuals" is the title of a pamphlet just brought out by the British Fabian Society and written by the young novelist and critic Kingsley Amis, author of *Lucky Jim*. It is a curious document. Thrown together with maddening carelessness, muddleheaded and embarrassingly naïve, arrogant and whining by turns, it yet does bring out one important fact. Mr. Amis and those intellectuals who are close to him are bored by the British Labour Party; can find no political issue that rouses their passions; and feel that the Welfare State is dreary and unsatisfying. Even when they vote Labour they do so with a yawn.

Mr. Amis represents a new coterie that has emerged in Britain during the past few years. After being snubbed or ignored by Chelsea and Bloomsbury for decades, the dons in the lesser-known provincial universities have risen at last. What they are for nobody is quite sure. Seedy and unsuccessful; writing in overcrowded rooms while the diapers steam just above their heads; worried and nervy, they are apparently urged on by a vast resentment. They are against Cyril Connolly and his snobbish taste for vintage wine; they are against Sir Osbert Sitwell and all that Italian architecture (besides the fellow was in the Guards and has a title); they dislike Communism but think anti-Communism is just as bad; they are even against the Welfare State, though it gave some of them their opportunity.

It should not be thought that Mr. Amis writes for all British intellectuals. There they go, remarks Paul Johnson, a brilliant young intellectual of the Left,

> the lecturers in Geology and Civics, veterinary surgeons and welfare officers, with their long-playing records and their ponytail-haired wives, their bottles of Spanish burgundy and volumes of A. J. Ayer. The university colleges of England echo with the tramp of their apathetic feet.

Mr. Johnson is savagely critical of Mr. Amis and his friends because, being a Socialist, he naturally thinks that these provincial intellectuals, failing some convenient barricade, should at least be in the committee rooms of their local Labour Parties. "The men," he writes, "who should be the rank-and-file of the progressive intelligentsia, the NCO's of the local party organizations, the subalterns of a new generation of Labour votes, are choosing to stay at home and indulge in the pursuit of civilization [tourist class]." Some of us might feel that this is too narrow a comment. What distinguishes the Amis group from the British intellectuals of the past—from Shelley and Byron as well as from Auden and Spender—is not their refusal to carry a portrait of Mr. Gaitskell through the streets of Cardiff. It is their provincialism. The provincial, of course, has many virtues; he is not to be fooled, is close to the soil, rugged, honest, simple, sometimes brash but often the true heir of tradition. But he sees no further than the nearest church spire and, like any chubby alderman, thinks that politics is about the merits of the local drainage system. So it is, but it is also about abstract principles, the place of man in society, his rights, duties and dignity. Indeed it is the acute awareness of these things that gives the intellectual elsewhere his authority. We may, for instance, admire or dislike Sartre, but no one would deny that he is at the center of his time. Mr. Amis is only in the center of Cardiff. So while Sartre thunders out his denunciation of the French Communist Party in a 50,000 word article in *Les Temps Modernes*, Mr. Amis can manage only a few obscure asides about Hungary. Hungary has, one feels, nothing to do with the tax value of the Cardiff shops.

Mr. Amis' provincialism also cuts him off from his immediate predecessors. The Thirties, as we all know, had a richly comic side. Those were the carefree days when the scented intellectuals, like the martyrs of old, abandoned their quill pens and red carnations and took part in demonstrations through the smarter streets of London. Imagine them in fancy dress—gray trousers and sports coats either borrowed or discovered in the gardening sheds of their middle-class homes—walking out of step past the Ritz; past Lobb's, the famous shoemakers; past White's, the best of clubs; on and on, from one humiliation to the next, while they croaked defiantly:

> One, two, three, four,
> Fascism means war.

It might also be said that this was the time when it was comparatively safe to play at revolution. The bourgeois order still appeared implacable and permanent. The aspidistra flourished in every middle-class window;

HUGH MASSINGHAM *is political correspondent for* The Observer, *a leading British Sunday newspaper.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tea and buttered toast continued to be served on sleek English lawns; and the Union Jack waved triumphantly wherever the sun rose. Revolution seemed as remote as the distant merits and defects of Robespierre.

But the Thirties had a more serious side. There were impurities, but it would be quite untrue to see the pre-war intellectuals in the image of Guy Burgess, who talked so much and did so little. The feeling underneath was genuine enough. Spender, Auden and Isherwood were all deeply influenced by Germany and were thus personally and emotionally outraged by Hitler's Fascism. Intellectuals are seldom men of action, but in the Thirties some of them were prepared to suffer for their beliefs. George Orwell risked death not only in the front lines of Spain but in defying the Communist secret police. He was not, in other words, merely theorizing about freedom.

Mr. Amis' answer to all this is that the intellectuals of the Thirties were in an enviable position. Abroad they had Spain and Fascism; at home there were two million unemployed. The significance of Hungary having escaped him, and not being interested in the social conflicts of his time, Mr. Amis imagines that he must fall back on the parish pump. The only issues today, he complains, are "the color bar, horror comics, juvenile delinquency . . . homosexuality"—admirable causes, no doubt, but hardly exciting. British socialism, one gathers, is altogether too tepid. "Mr. Gaitskell is running the show now, and he isn't violent, in fact . . . not at all the sort of man one expects to see at the head of the Labour Party." Indeed, like so many frustrated people, Mr. Amis comes to a final irresponsibility. Although not a Marxist, he appears to long for some holocaust that will warm his sluggish blood.

Even that may fail; which will certainly be bad luck for the rest of us. It appears that the only recent issue which has roused Mr. Amis from his lethargy and boredom is the British invasion of Egypt. Here at last one feels, with a quickening of interest, is surely the fire that will set those damp faggots alight. Instead here is Mr. Amis' illuminating reaction:

> And while we are on boring meetings, let me complain as savagely as possible about the local Labour Party meeting on Suez which, breaking a habit of nearly 15 years' standing, I went so far as to attend, vowing to join the party immediately afterwards. Within a quarter of an hour I had silently released myself from my vow. I had forgotten what political meetings were like. Out they poured from speaker after speaker, all the vile old sick-and-tired thought-savers: "I am sure I speak for all of us here when I say that we deeply deplore . . . act of wanton aggression . . . policy based on international justice . . . extend the hand of friendship . . . spirit in the country today . . . united as never before . . . go forward to victory." In my undisciplined way I could not, or anyhow did not, refrain from groaning slightly at some of this. . . . And I saw that those who call for a war on clichés in popular political writing and speechifying are wasting their time. It is on clichés that majorities are and must be fed.

The only possible conclusion would seem to be that these vulgar illiterates should not have a vote.

Paul Johnson thinks that Mr. Amis is already out of date—that this pamphlet may be the "last will and testament" of Lucky Jim. It may be so. Hungary and Suez happened only yesterday, and it will be some little time before we can be sure whether they will have a lasting influence on our thinking. What evidence we have, especially from the universities, suggests that they have produced a sudden and angry stirring that has apparently escaped Mr. Amis and his friends. "Does our feeling about Hungary remind you of what your generation felt in the 1930's?" an Oxford undergraduate asked Stephen Spender at a recent meeting of the Union held on behalf of the Hungarian refugees. Mr. Spender's conclusion, written in the form of notes for a diary, is much more encouraging and civilized than Mr. Amis' exasperating pamphlet:

> The Oxford Union meeting [Spender says] showed that the response of Oxford youth to Hungary has been very like that of an earlier generation in Spain. The same young, rather bored with themselves and very bored with everything else, suddenly wakened by a demand on their sympathies by other human beings in a country all one prison. Once again inhumanity—the oppression of the people whose resistance and outcries have been heard—has made politics human again.

We can all hope that Mr. Spender is right. For if the Amis attitude is going to decide British thought during the next decade, the results may be much more serious than even Mr. Johnson has realized. A democracy depends for its vitality upon discussion and argument at all levels of society. If the intellectuals remove themselves from it, there will inevitably be a vacuum that will be filled by something else. And it will not be to the liking of Mr. Amis.

Next Week

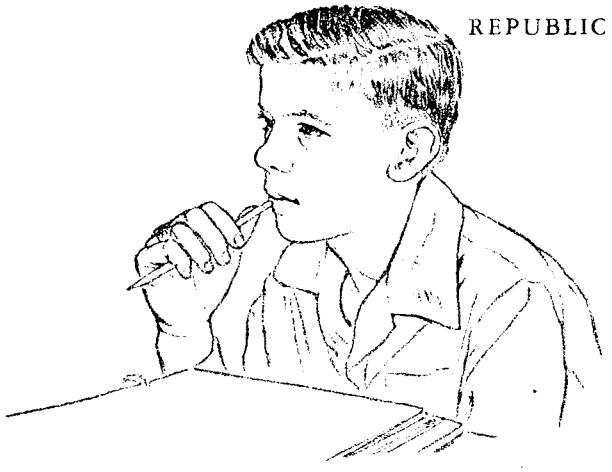
"Talks with the Soviet Intellectuals"

by GEORGE GIBIAN

Mr. Gibian, a professor of Soviet Literature at Smith College who visited the literary elite of Moscow, Leningrad, Odessa, and Kiev last autumn, tells what he learned from conversations with leading editors, teachers, writers, critics and scholars in the Soviet Union.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Educating the Gifted Child



by ARTHUR BESTOR

AMERICAN education is dedicated to equality of opportunity. This is as it should be. The phrase, however, must be amplified before it can become a safe guide to action. Equality, after all, can be achieved by diminishing as well as by increasing the value of what is given. Unfortunately there is such a thing as equal *denial* of opportunity.

A trustworthy concept of equal educational opportunity must rest upon a broader base than the experience of a single nation. Young Americans are not being offered genuine equality of opportunity unless they can obtain what young men and women elsewhere are receiving. Children of average or less than average ability are not the only ones who deserve consideration in a democracy. The child of high intellectual capacity has his democratic rights, too. He is entitled to receive, in an American public school, an education equal in seriousness, intensity, and comprehensiveness to the education that a child of similar capacity would receive in the best school systems of any other country.

The American public school today does not, by and large, offer this kind of equality of opportunity. Even among professional defenders of the educational *status quo*, few are so hardy as to allege that the superior student is being regularly called upon to work at the top of his capacity in the typical high school, or that he is being challenged by standards as exacting as those imposed without question upon candidates for advancement up the educational ladders of most European countries. In the process of equalizing educational opportunity *among* Americans, we have somehow permitted our ablest students to be deprived of the only kind of equality that really counts for them—opportunity to equip themselves with intellectual training as thorough and rigorous as that which young men and women of comparable ability abroad carry with them into the arena where intellectual distinction is won.

This sacrifice might be tolerable if only it were temporary, if it were merely part of the price of creating, almost overnight, a vast system of universal education. The appalling thing is that this denial of opportunity is being treated by countless professional educationists in this country not as an evil but as a positive good. Many of them have scruples against providing brilliant students with instruction specially geared to their abilities. They are opposed to using public funds to maintain small classes in the specialized fields and at the advanced levels that the ablest high school students alone are likely to need and to elect. They somehow consider it undemocratic to honor and reward students for outstanding academic achievement or to push them ahead faster and farther than their fellows when they demonstrate their ability and their willingness to work.

In recent years, it is true, there has been considerable to-do about making provision for "exceptional children." To understand what the bustle is really about, one has to bear in mind the peculiar, not to say demented, definition which educationists give of this particular term. Allow me to quote, from a standard work of reference, a statement of the matter written by an official of the United States Office of Education:

> A considerable number of children, estimated at about four million, deviate sufficiently from mental, physical, and behavioral norms to require special educational provision. Among them are the blind and the partially seeing, the deaf and the hard of hearing, the speech-defective, the crippled, the delicate, the epileptic, the mentally deficient, the socially maladjusted *and the extraordinarily gifted.*

Equality of educational opportunity, in any defensible sense, cannot exist for an able student in an American public school so long as the authorities in charge persist in viewing him simply as a deviate from the mental and behavioral norm.

The public school has, of course, other responsibilities besides the education of exceptionally gifted children. It has none, however, exceeding this one in importance. The school must face this responsibility squarely. The thorough intellectual training of the able student is a purpose of education not dependent on or subordinate to other purposes. To furnish it in the most direct and forthright manner is a primary obligation of every

---

ARTHUR BESTOR, *Professor of History at the University of Illinois, is serving as Harmsworth Professor of American History at Oxford University during 1956-1957.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

school—an obligation not only to the student himself but also to the nation, which has a vital interest in the training imparted. To be quite specific, the education of the gifted child must never be looked upon as a mere variant of, or supplement to, the education provided for the child of merely average ability. The relationship is—or most emphatically ought to be—the other way around. The brilliant student is the pacesetter of the school. He is the one for whom its academic program has the greatest significance. The curriculum for the average student is the one to be thought of as derivative. His deficiency, not the brilliant student's "deviation from the norm," is what makes adaptation necessary. To argue otherwise is to enshrine mediocrity.

On the Worship of Mediocrity

Much of the talk about "enriched programs" for brilliant students is tainted with precisely this worship of mediocrity. Even though a particular program may in itself be sound, this label turns it into a grudging concession. A great many of the programs for enrichment, however, are basically unsound. One characteristic of the brilliant mind is that it learns quickly. It can grasp ideas after performing only a fraction of the number of exercises that are necessary to impress the same principles or concepts upon one less active and alert. What the brilliant student needs to do is to progress as rapidly as he can from one level of abstraction to a higher level, from one difficult task to another more difficult. Far too many programs of "enrichment" propose to keep the mental activity of the able student down among the same relatively simple concepts as those with which his companions are struggling, while occupying his time with tasks that are simply more time-consuming than those assigned to the average child. This is precisely the reverse of what the situation calls for. The slow learners are the ones who ought to go through masses of material while concepts gradually take form in their minds. The brilliant student ought to take at once the next step up the ladder toward concepts more complex and mature.

What we need is not "enrichment" but a genuine program of education for the able child, constructed from the ground up, based upon the accumulated experience of all great schools of all countries. By facing this responsibility squarely and dealing with it in its own terms, we cut through at once much of the fog that envelops current pedagogical thinking. We are on high ground where much is known, not on the misty flats where there is little but conjecture to guide us. The fact is that we know vastly more about what brilliant students are able to achieve than we know about the potential capacities of average ones. We know it from experience. For centuries school systems throughout the world devoted their principal attention to the upper third, or the upper quarter, or the upper fifth of the population, measured in terms of intellectual ability. Many still do. We know very well what their students succeed in mastering. We know it from the syllabi they successfully follow, from the examinations they successfully pass, from the intellectual skills one can confidently expect them to put to use at the end of their secondary-school careers. A tremendous body of evidence thus exists as to what the able student can accomplish before the age of graduation from high school, if only he is given the education he is entitled to.

This is worth spelling out. We know from experience that the able student can master mathematics through plane geometry, trigonometry, and fairly advanced algebra so as to be ready to study the calculus at least by the age of 18. We know that he can acquire real mastery of two or three languages besides his own, for such a requirement is common in European school systems. We know that he can attain to high fluency and accuracy in the writing of his own language, and can have read and understood a substantial number of books of considerable difficulty, belonging to the classics of literature and thought. We know that he can obtain effective grasp upon the main features of world history and of the history of his own country. We know that he can acquire a substantial foundation of knowledge in such basic areas of science as biology, chemistry, and physics. We know that he can accomplish all these things simultaneously during the 12 years of schooling normally offered, and at the same time participate in the athletics that will keep his physical constitution sound. Finally, from the investigations of such American psychologists as Dr. Irving Lorge of Teachers College, Columbia University, we know that the gains achieved by the gifted child through accelerated academic programs geared to his abilities are "not at the expense of social or personal adjustment."

We know something else about the gifted child. We know that he will have real and pressing need for the kinds of knowledge and skill just specified. These are the intellectual tools that are required in the learned professions, in research, and in the conduct of public affairs at the highest levels. The right to equal opportunity means, for the child of high intellectual capacity, the right eventually to enter these professions and to compete for world honors in them, unhandicapped by deficiencies of training. He has a right to expect that the American public school will assist, not handicap, him in entering the professional and learned world, if he is willing to work toward this end. The school must not mislead the able student by suggesting that intellectual training is unimportant, and it must not slam the doors of opportunity shut in his face by denying him the chance to master the intel-

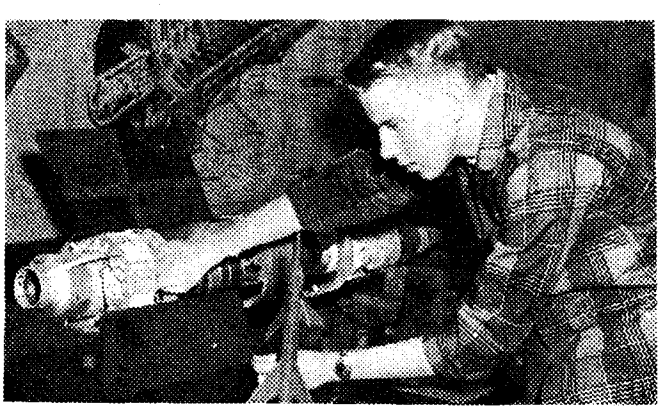
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lectual disciplines that are universally recognized as fundamental.

How is the American public school, especially the public high school, to fulfill its responsibility to the able student?

First of all, school authorities must accept the responsibility honestly, and not allow the discussion of it to be obscured by irrelevancies. In carrying out this particular task the question of the changed character of the school population is beside the point. The change has a bearing upon other policies of the school, not upon this. Children of high intellectual ability and interest may have constituted a larger proportion of the high-school population at the end of the 19th Century than now, but they are still present in our schools and their needs still have to be met. The gifted child is a gifted child whether he is enrolled in a selective school system like that of many European countries or in a system of universal education like ours. We have the same responsibility to such students as we had when our schools were less inclusive. Young men and women of brilliant intellect are enrolled in our schools in larger absolute numbers than ever before in history or than in any other nation. These students are entitled to as sound and thorough and advanced an education as they would have received in earlier days or as they would receive in foreign schools.

Given the present temper of those who call themselves professional educationists in the United States, it is exceedingly doubtful that programs suitable for gifted children will ever originate with them. Leadership must come, if it is to come at all, from scholars, scientists, and professional men. These are the men and women who are aware of the real requirements of the modern intellectual world. They know at first hand, as no person concerned solely with secondary education can possibly know, what is involved in the final stages of the education that the able student must receive on his way into his profession. Scholars and scientists, moreover, are not afraid of intellectual brilliance, as so many professional educationists appear to be, and they have never been tempted to treat it as a pathological condition, classifiable with blindness,



epilepsy and mental deficiency. Accordingly I am hopeful that the learned societies of the nation will come together to work out the kind of program that students of high intellectual calibre ought to pursue in the public elementary and secondary schools of the United States.

What Should Twelve Years Teach?

The first task is to define the content that the able student should be expected to master by the end of the 12 years of secondary schooling ordinarily provided. Content, of course, is to be defined not only in terms of the range of knowledge that a student should acquire, but also, and especially, in terms of the level of difficulty of the concepts that he should be expected to handle with confidence in each of the basic fields. The standards for the various fields—specifically for English, for mathematics, for the sciences, for history and for foreign languages—ought to be based upon the known achievements of brilliant students in the best schools of the world. Our models should be drawn from the curricula of the schools that have consistently maintained the highest academic standards, whether in the United States or abroad, whether public or private. There should be consultation with the freshman and sophomore instructional staffs of the colleges and universities that insist upon the highest entrance requirements. The recommendations of educational commissions that were genuinely concerned with academic accomplishment must be resurrected and studied.

The final report of the scholarly and scientific commission charged with such a study ought first of all to state explicitly the standards of achievement to be expected of able high-school graduates in each of the various fields. Such a statement would be of immense value to the universities in revising their entrance requirements, and to state and local authorities in establishing standards for high-school courses and certificates. The commission ought to go further, by distributing these ultimate requirements among the appropriate grades of the 12-year American public-school system. At this stage the co-operation of educational psychologists, of persons experienced in the classrooms of public schools, and of teachers in the great independent (or private) schools of the country would be essential. Careful attention must obviously be given to the problem of equalizing and balancing the responsibilities assigned to different grades, and there must be provision for legitimate options and electives. The commission must also make sure that sufficient hours are reserved in each year for physical education and for moderate extra-curricular activities.

The final report should be submitted to the public in clear and understandable form, prefaced by a carefully reasoned argument respecting its desirability and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

feasibility. That such a program would be supported by many organizations of professional educationists is too much to hope. If, however, it were backed by leading scientific, scholarly, and professional societies, public opinion would, I feel sure, force educational administrators to take it seriously.

To bring into existence a well-reasoned alternative to the existing educational chaos is a first step to educational reform. Public opinion, now deeply alarmed about the quality of our schools, could make such a set of proposals a guide to action. The lines of action that ought to be followed may be briefly indicated.

Controlling the Curriculum

No program for able students can exist in a school that does not actually offer the courses they must have if they are to obtain an adequate education. The first task, accordingly, is to make sure that every local high school offers the full complement of courses that are known to be needed. This is the duty, in the first instance, of local school boards and of the citizens of every community. Backing should be given by state and national agencies. At the very least, these should begin to obtain and to publish full reports showing which school systems and which schools are actually offering a complete roster of courses in the basic fields, and which are deficient. A local citizen is entitled to know how his school measures up, according to recognized, objective criteria like these.

State and federal agencies are justified, by logic and precedent, in going far beyond the mere compiling of statistics. They already do. Much of what is currently said about local control of the public schools is sheer myth. Very substantial control is—and for many decades has been—exercised from every state capital. Grants in aid constitute a large part of most school budgets, and these grants are conditioned upon maintenance of a wide variety of standards fixed by the state. Laws governing the certification of teachers compel a local community to choose its teachers from those who have pursued a particular course of study, heavily weighted with courses in pedagogy. The federal goverment, too, has played a far greater role in the determination of school policy than cliché-ridden discussions by educationists would indicate. For 40 years—since the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917—it has poured funds into vocational training, thus exerting (especially in smaller school districts) a tremendous pressure in a vocational direction upon the curriculum, regardless of the wishes and the needs of the local community. The federal Office of Education has lent its prestige to such anti-intellectual programs as "Life Adjustment Education," and even its statistical publications reflect a definite bias in favor of "functional education," a concept which it blithely equates with declining emphasis on algebra, geometry, physics and Latin.

To say, in other words, that state and federal governments must come to the rescue of intellectual training in the schools is not to say that they must increase their influence in local affairs or invade a sphere hitherto untouched by them. The invasion has already taken place. The tragedy of the present situation is that the pressures placed upon local schools by state and federal agencies have had virtually nothing to do with the maintenance of *academic* standards. In many instances they have been highly inimical to such standards, forcing community schools into exaggerated vocationalism and obliging them to accept teachers with few intellectual qualifications but abundant pedagogical credits. The present need is not for an increase of state or federal control, but for a drastic reversal of policy in the use of powers already being exercised.

Many public-school policies ought certainly to be controlled locally. Whether vocational training should be offered, how much, and in what fields are questions so dependent on local conditions that they ought to be decided by the community without outside pressure. So too are such questions as the extent and character of extra-curricular activities and athletics. Local school boards, not state bureaus, should decide whether a potential teacher is qualified by personality and experience to handle the pedagogical problems arising in the classroom. Local citizens should decide upon the character of their school buildings and the luxuriousness of their equipment, in accordance with the standards of their other public buildings, and should, in general, meet the costs of construction and maintenance as for other tangible community assets. At present there is continual and unjustified interference by state and federal agencies with local control of these matters.

On other issues, the state and nation are so vitally concerned that their interference is justified. If a community fails to offer the fundamental courses needed by able students, the total intellectual resources of the nation are diminished. If it diverts funds from the educational program and from teachers' salaries to quasi-professional athletics and to the upkeep of overlavish buildings, the same kind of harm is done. And if a community is too poor to support a full program of academic studies, then state and nation are justified in stepping in with subsidies for this particular purpose, in the interests of nationwide equality of opportunity.

No local prerogatives would be endangered if state and federal agencies were to undertake wholeheartedly to undergird the basic academic curriculum in the nation's schools. The fundamentals of learning do not vary community by community. Physics and mathematics are the same in Pasadena and Schenectady. English may be pronounced with a slightly different accent in Boston and Atlanta, but its grammar is the same and the classics

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of its literature are the heritage of all. Spanish may be the most important second language for a rancher in Texas, and German for an engineer in New York, but that foreign languages should be studied is a proposition independent of region. Some aspects of history, it is true, touch local sensibilities, but this very fact shows the universal relevance of history as such. To insure that these subjects are universally taught would involve no such invasion of local autonomy as occurs at present through federal subsidies to vocational training and through state certification laws making course work in pedagogy an absolute prerequisite for teaching.

The first duty of a state in supervising the schools of its local communities is to make sure that students receive adequate educational opportunity in all of them. State aid to a given school should be made dependent upon its offering a complete roster of courses in the fundamental fields of learning. With respect to subjects deemed essential in the preparation of able students, small enrollments in a given class should not exempt a school from offering it.

If necessary, the federal government should take a hand. If all other agencies fail, it must be the one to sustain the fundamental disciplines, simply because the nation's strength and security depend upon these. It is especially disheartening that the recent proposals for expanding federal aid to education should have dealt solely with bricks and mortar. When the issue of federal aid comes up again, it is to be hoped that it will take the form of aid to *education*, not aid to building construction. The federal funds (whether old or new) that go into education ought to be concentrated upon a single great objective: making sure that the four-year high schools of even the poorest communities are offering four years of science, four years of mathematics, four years of at least two foreign languages, four years of substantial history, four years of effective training in the reading and writing of English. Then and only then will we have real equality of educational opportunity throughout the land.

To do justice to our able students we must have not only a sound curriculum but also instructors capable of inspiring students with first-rate minds. A teacher whose training has been mainly in methods of teaching will rarely, if ever, succeed. The dull student can be manipulated by experts in manipulation. But the respect of the student with intellectual interests will only be won by the teacher whose own intellectual interests are active and whose knowledge is broad and deep enough for him to lead his students on to further knowledge. The schools of the world that specialize in educating the ablest students rightly demand teachers whose training has been, first and foremost, in the basic intellectual disciplines. They rightly regard pedagogical training as a mere supplement to a thorough education in the liberal arts and sciences. They insist that their teachers return to the university for graduate work, not in pedagogy or education, but in their chosen fields of instruction. The concept of teacher-training fostered in the United States by professional educationists is the direct antithesis of this. A thoroughgoing reform of our system of teacher-training and of our certification requirements for teachers is a necessary part of the process of enlarging educational opportunity in America.

Raising the Average Level

To build an adequate program for the education of gifted children is actually the best way to go about creating an adequate program for those of average ability also. For one thing we need to stop treating the difference between pupils of varying ability as a difference in kind, and recognize it as a difference in degree. To offer intellectual training to one and vocational or "life-adjustment" training to another is not to create a classless education, even though all students may mingle in the same building. Programs that are inherently unequal in intellectual quality cannot furnish equal educational opportunity. Professional educationists are ready to assert the contrary and to quote with approval the dictum: "Equality does not mean identity." It is relevant to note that the phrase comes from the Supreme Court's decision in *Hall* v. *DeCuir* (95 US 485 at 503)—the decision of 1877 that legalized racial discrimination in the South.

If we genuinely believe in democracy in education, and if we accept the idea that democracy is a process of levelling up, then we come around to the position—in my judgment the only sound position—that the great function of the public schools is to narrow the educational gap between the gifted child and the child of average ability by offering to the latter the opportunity and the encouragement to obtain an intellectual training of the same high quality and seriousness, up to the very limit of whatever capacity he may possess. To raise the intellectual level of the nation means bringing the average student as far along the path of intellectual training as he is capable of going.

Beyond the problem of educating the gifted child looms the problem that should challenge the resources of a new generation of research workers in psychology and education—the problem of precisely how far up the ladder of intellectual training the students at each level of intellectual ability can be expected to climb. Once we have the facts, we will find, I suspect, that we can carry the intellectual training of the average child much farther than we have come to assume. In the meantime we have an obligation to act in accordance with our faith in the ability of the common man. If we do, we shall be preserving America's most valuable resource—intellectual talent—not merely at the highest level, but at every level of our educational system.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & COMMENT

FDR and the Pudgy Prometheus

by Richard L. Strout

WHAT a drama it was! Nothing in American history, I think, was ever like it. On one side Hoover with high collar— conscientious, gloomy, martyred to an old order, on the other Roosevelt with tilted cigarette holder— insouciant, crippled but exuberant. . . . And on the pavements shuffled 13 million unemployed. Most of this I saw, part of this I was; no Washington reporter can read a book like this without seeing ghosts over every page.

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., has set himself, it appears, to write a trilogy on Roosevelt of which this lengthy study is only the introduction. It covers 1919 to 1932 and brings FDR down to his inauguration. You might suppose it would be dull because, after all, when you buy a book about Roosevelt you expect it to center on him. Actually this volume divides itself roughly in two; the dominant figure of the first—almost without the author's intention—is Hoover; of the second FDR. There is a final section where the two antagonists come to grips and an era ends. We see Roosevelt's background: first the priggish undergraduate, the rather dilettantish and I think somewhat disagreeable Young Man of Infinite Charm; then the fateful plunge into the paralyzing waters off Campobello Island and the polio—and the emergence of a deeper man who had brushed aside death and fear and who had won "a new power, a new sympathy, a new self-control, a new specific gravity."

The Age of Roosevelt: The Crisis of the Old Order, by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. (Houghton Mifflin; $6).

The book starts with the end of World War I and the beginning of what the author calls "The Age of Roosevelt." And out of it in brilliant chapters that recall the author's *Age of Jackson* emerge the America of yesterday and the breath-taking collapse of idealism and victory of materialism. But it is Hoover who is the vivid symbol. I venture to guess that before long somebody will write a play about Hoover. He is one of our great tragic figures; heroic in his incomprehension. By contrast Harding and Coolidge were petty men. Harding, the successor who erased Wilson's idealism was a good-natured, handsome, small-town sport; Coolidge a bleak, self-satisfied thin-lipped little man, dedicated to inactivity. They prepared the storm and Hoover reaped it. Hoover was of larger cast, a man of capacity and noble aspirations; he was as helpless before the fates as the Greek chained to a rock while the eagle consumed his liver—a pudgy Prometheus.

Hoover, with the quiet inner light of the Quaker, put aside a brilliantly successful career as international organizer of vast enterprises to undertake public service, first in Belgium and then masterfully in Washington. In 1920 Herbert Croly in *The New Republic* launched a campaign for Hoover on the Democratic ticket; it may startle readers to learn that Hoover even seemed interested in buying stock in *The New Republic.* And although Mr. Schlesinger does not mention it, Mr. Hoover in those years went so far as to speak of *The NR* as "the best-balanced organ of liberal opinion in America today." But Hoover was damned for all that. He has never shown signs of understanding the times. What was good was what he believed in; what was vicious was one inch beyond the limit of belief he allowed himself.

It would be easy to ridicule the glum, gray-faced president who, as breadlines lengthened, lengthened his day's work and took an ever-stronger position for balanced budget, sales-tax and local relief. Schlesinger is not unkind, he lets the story speak for itself; how the Gods made the stiff-collared figure their sport while he stuck loyally to his ideals, how he let the crucial minute after the 1929 crash slip by when a relatively small amount of public spending might have checked "the cumulative forces of breakdown," and how his inward, sensitive soul recoiled at the voters' cruelty. He did not wilt, he fought bravely back, issued deeply-felt statements declaring that if America meant anything it meant individual and local responsibility. He was no more ignorant of his time than most; only a few economists like Keynes understood. The economy had got one jump ahead of the economists.

This is high drama indeed. In the center of the Schlesinger volume there is a temporary let-down as we go to another part of the forest and pick up the early life of FDR. We watch the princeling from the Hudson River aristocracy develop into an enormously magnetic and rather superficial young man. Then the story quickens again as FDR goes through his private hell, emerges crippled and unconquered, yields against his better judgment to Al Smith's pressure to run in 1928 for governor of New York ("A governor does not have to be an acrobat," Al cracked at Madison Square Garden, "we do not elect him for his ability to do a double back-flip."). He won the governorship while Smith failed to carry the state and thereby became the almost inevitable Democratic nominee for president and—as things stood—next president. A Chinaman could have beaten Hoover in 1932 though Mr. Schlesinger doesn't stress the point.

WHAT Schlesinger brings out most clearly, I think, is that America was teetering on the brink of a physical revolution after 1929 and that FDR pulled it back. This has been said before, of course, but the new book pins it down. FDR, whose enemies called him "revolutionary," actually put the derailed nation back again on the track.

In general Schlesinger preserves his historical poise. We could almost stand a little more editorializing. The careful selection of incident tells most of the story but here and there a more complete author's judgment would be acceptable. The healing hand of time has already shown that Hoover though mistaken was a good man, that FDR, though a towering figure, had a more enigmatic side under the elan.

It is Schlesinger's conclusion on FDR,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in a memorable passage, that "detachment endowed him with a capacity for craftiness in politics and for calculation, sometimes even for cruelty in human relations." He could be shallow intellectually, Schlesinger admits, and "so he could be tricky and evasive morally."

His final judgment:

> At bottom, Franklin Roosevelt was a man without illusions, clearheaded and compassionate, who had been close enough to death to understand the frailty of human striving, but who remained loyal enough to life to do his best in the sight of God.

We haven't gobbled down a book like this for a long time. It ends with Inaugural Day, March 4, 1933—and we can't wait for Schlesinger to tell us what happened next.

An Army of Ill-Will Ambassadors

by Joseph P. Lyford

MOST of us who read the newspapers are familiar with our government's efforts to win the trust of our Latin American neighbors. But the general public is not aware of the fact that, along with holding Pan American solidarity conventions, we are busily engaged in planting bewilderment and hostility in the minds of half a million Mexicans each year.

Strangers in Our Fields, by Ernesto Galarza ($.50; US-Mexico Trade Union Committee, 815 16th St., N. W., Washington, D. C.).

Credit for developing this army of ill-will ambassadors goes to employers' groups in the West and Southwest who for years have been mistreating the Mexican nationals they employ as seasonal farm laborers, and to government officials and members of Congress who have been letting the employers get away with it.

The program under which the Mexican contract workers, or *braceros,* are brought into the United States began in 1942 with an international agreement between the United States and Mexico. The *braceros* were to work in those areas where there was an acute shortage of unskilled farm labor. The contract workers are not to be confused with Mexican "wetbacks" who enter the country illegally: under the international agreement about 500,000 *braceros* were imported for farm work last year and were given guarantees of decent wages and living conditions by the governments of Mexico and the United States.

Over a period of time the *braceros* have come to regard these guarantees of fair play—and the word of the government which issues them—as worthless. The attitude is understandable in view of the failure of Congress and the Department of Labor to prevent them from institutionalized exploitation. Congress has steadily reduced appropriations for Labor Department compliance officers, although the number of Mexicans brought in under the program has more than doubled. At present the Department averages less than two compliance officers to enforce contracts for each state in which the Mexicans are used. Consequently, those employers who have been treating the *braceros* like the inmates of a slave labor camp can do so with relative impunity.

The description of the *braceros* as "foreign slaves" is not used lightly. One who used the phrase is the Most Reverend Robert E. Lucey, Roman Catholic Archbishop of San Antonio. In an article in *Commonweal,* January 15, 1954, Archbishop Lucey characterized the situation this way: "Employers' greed, power politics, exploitation, child labor and general neglect have produced a situation which is the scandal of the world."

Such criticism as this has been largely ignored in the past by the employers associations and by the federal and state departments of labor which are the agencies primarily responsible for protecting the *braceros'* rights. However, the issue has flared up again, and promises to bring some remedial action. The cause has been publication by the US Section of the Joint US-Mexico Trade Union Committee, under a Fund for the Republic grant, of a field study of the Mexican contract workers' program. The author is Dr. Ernesto Galarza, the Committee's field representative in California. His *Strangers in Our Fields* is the impressive result of a four months' investigation of conditions in 156 separate work camps, most of them in California and the Southwest.

The Galarza report is the description of a perpetual nightmare. It reveals that the *braceros* receive a net average of around $25 a week, that many are living in rotting shanties, farm buildings and tents, that the men are often over-

A Spider

A SPIDER spun the dark from leaf to fence
arc by arc with clever latticework
whose silk intention was a wheel of death,
then, like a god, she gamboled out of space
connected to creation by a thread.

Dozing in her parlor, venom plump,
she waited for the tug of victim wings
and pounced on struggling dinners in her sleep,
sucking until husks from bloody tables dropped.
Though there are other points of view to things—

a wind blew just enough, a quince unstemmed,
bombing her flimsy habit to a rag—
eight footed acrobat, she hung midair again
and cunning as a mind began to mend
catastrophe with gossamer, wrecked egomaniac.

HAROLD WITT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

crowded with little or no sanitary or heating facilities, that they are denied proper medical attention, that they are being systematically mulcted of their pay by illegal deductions and that the *bracero* who protests at this treatment is usually returned to Mexico or transferred to another camp. The 80-page report also lists shocking refinements of almost every conceivable kind of exploitation. Even the food allowance due the *bracero* from his employer becomes a source of gain to others: the job of feeding the workers is frequently handled by concessionaires who derive their profit by cheapening the quality and lessening the quantity of food to which the *bracero* is entitled.

The reaction of the employers' associations to the Galarza report could easily be anticipated. They have undertaken an intensive publicity campaign to discredit both the report and the author. The California Farm Labor Association has gone so far as to request Secretary of Labor James Mitchell to prevent circulation of the report—something the Secretary was obviously in no position to do even had he been so inclined.

THE employers associations' attacks on Galarza's study met initially with the most friendly reception from some officials in the Department of Labor. Some observers feel that officials in the Department helped inspire the attack. These officials were not incensed solely over the report's conclusion that the Department had neglected its job of forcing employers to comply with standards set up in the international agreement and by government agencies.

Department of Labor spokesman Robert C. Goodwin, in a letter to the California State Board of Agriculture, (which had already attacked the report), charged that Galarza had shown a "reckless disregard for accuracy" and had been guilty of a "studied attempt" to distort the picture. To back up his statement, Goodwin cited a handful of alleged inaccuracies in the report, most of them of a trivial nature when placed against the burden of the full report. Goodwin charged, for instance, that in the case of one *bracero*, Galarza had deliberately cited the man's worst week of earnings which amounted to a net of eighty-five cents. Actually, Goodwin declared, over a twenty-nine work week period this worker had received net earnings of $778.69, or the princely average of $27.00 a week. Technically, Goodwin was right; but as one labor union official put it, his argument merely reinforced Galarza's point that the employee in question was being grossly underpaid. Apparently following the established bureaucratic precept that loyalty to a subordinate and defense of one's department transcends all other public duties, Secretary Mitchell supported Goodwin in his effort to discredit the report. Those who know the Secretary as a well-intentioned man blame the move on his inadequate knowledge of the contract worker program.

BUT the Department has not been allowed to forget the Galarza report. A recent meeting of the US-Mexico Trade Union Committee demanded that the Secretary of Labor appoint a tripartite commission representing labor, the employees and the public to investigate thoroughly the operation of the Mexican contract labor importation program. In reply to Goodwin's charges against Galarza, the labor union representatives produced additional evidence. It was also pointed out that a photographer had compiled a complete documentary record of conditions in all camps covered in Galarza's survey. During the course of the meeting, Goodwin requested that his attack on the Galarza report not be considered as official Department of Labor policy.

This month the Department is still stoutly maintaining its innocence of any negligence toward the *braceros*. However, beneath the surface it appears that Galarza's study, widely publicized in the labor press and in Mexico, has accomplished at least part of its objective. Already, a number of the worst of the *bracero* camps have been closed down. There is a marked increase of activity by federal and state enforcement officers at other camps. In a rare state of defensiveness, employers associations are rushing improvements in some existing camps, and pointing to model camps as typical of conditions which prevail elsewhere. And in his current budget message to Congress, President Eisenhower has asked for an increase in the number of compliance officers—an increase which, while considered inadequate, is at least a step in the right direction.

James A. Michener

has written the first full-scale, on-the-spot account of the revolt of the Hungarian people... when communism showed its true face to the world

James A. Michener was there, at the Austrian-Hungarian border, during the time the victims of Russian terrorism were fleeing. He helped many of the refugees across the bridge at Andau, he talked to hundreds of them. Now, based upon what he saw, and heard, and learned, he tells the whole epochal story of the six weeks which opened the first real crack in the communist shell. This is a thunder clap of a book . . . a magnificent portrait of the will to be free — more gripping, more exciting, more moving, than almost any fiction.

THE Bridge AT Andau

By JAMES A. MICHENER

$3.50, now at your bookstore
RANDOM HOUSE, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Miss Ivy's Tobacco Road

by Bass Yarling

THERE are no printed or taped recordings of human life as it is lived on land, sea or in the air quite like the fiction of Miss Ivy Compton-Burnett. The lady is a comedy writer of agitating power and chicane although her comic muse wears the satiric grin of the death's head. Her favored jokes are theft, busy duplicity, forgery and plagiarism, genteel homicide, adultery and incest. She also achieves droll effects from a presentation of well-bred sadism and her assaults on all forms of entrenched dignity are full of mischief.

Brothers and Sisters, by Ivy Compton-Burnett (Zero; $3.75).

As a consequence, it would be difficult to explain why, after periodic attempts to tickle the English-speaking peoples since 1911, she has not been more popular in the United States. Our appetite for the macabre has developed both range and variety—plus, no doubt, considerable irresponsibility. We believe, for example, that the Marx Brothers or *Arsenic and Old Lace* are just as funny as the White Citizens' Councils or a testimonial dinner for an alderman. We defend our constitutional right to laugh as merrily at a newspaper's comic strips as at its editorials, even though the humor of the former may seem to have less slapstick.

Given such catholicity, we should be ashamed of our failure to pay more substantial heed to Miss Ivy's efforts to disport us; such inadequacy would seem to be a regressive symptom in American culture. Let us be grateful for an opportunity to purge it. The opportunity comes with the first American publication of an early (1929) Compton-Burnett classic, *Brothers and Sisters.* The book is neither as important nor as tidy as most of her novels written after 1929, but it marks the birth of a technique that has caused many an enfeebled critic to wish that he had taken up some other line of work.

This irrationally gifted Englishwoman has had a few parodists but no really hopeful imitators. Her stories merchandise a kind of low-pitched horror by a method known as the "soft sell." They have an atmosphere of poised amorality in which betting odds are usually stacked in favor of rascals. Normal behavior (her plots keep emphasizing) tends toward wickedness; she, as a stable and self-respecting artist, does not propose to adjust them to anything as artificial as "poetic justice."

"You go your way and I'll go mine," was the essence of her reply to *The New Statesman* which had scolded her for not being more penal in her handling of the hateful rogues in one of her books. "*The New Statesman* wants wickedness to be punished," she said primly, "but my point is that it is *not* punished and that is why it is natural to be guilty of it. When it is likely to be punished, most of us avoid it." There is a note of forgiveness, almost transcendental, in her judgment of the world's reprobates:

> . . . I think that life makes great demands on people's characters and gives them . . . great opportunity to serve their own ends by the sacrifice of other people. Such ill-doing may meet with little retribution, may indeed be hardly recognized, and I cannot feel surprised if people yield to it.

This notion does some violence to the standard views of both church and state and her manner of giving it credibility smacks of trickery as well as genius.

She does not recite these grisly tales herself but transfers the job to her characters. Once created and in good voice, they take over her show and snub their author by the treacherous process of expressing themselves in language superior to her own. At only rare intervals does she venture to interrupt her talk-maddened creatures with such fluff as narration, description or exegesis.

Thus Miss Ivy seems merely to look on as her actors build books with their conversation. They unravel her abrasive anti-social fables with a rhetoric that would ravish the angels. The flash of eloquence is, to her people, as undeliberate a function as breathing. They are prisoners of a literary trance. They cry havoc or emit tea-table sounds with epigrams of the same coolness and formality.

The end result is not so much a novel in which conversation is the dominant ingredient as a series of luminous colloquies pieced together with such sleight-of-hand that the equivalent of a novel (or play or dissertation) emerges.

Brothers and Sisters follows the Compton-Burnett formula in most details. It has the usual family "tyrant" from whom all blessings flee. It is dedicated to human error but not the sort of misplay that engages the attention of a public prosecutor. The only overt defiance of law and mores is an offhand adultery which had occurred a quarter of a century before the story officially opens. The male partner in the momentary union was an Andrew Stace—a fine, hearty example of the British landed gentry—rich in acres, ancestral tradition, and oppressively garrulous. A son issues from the affectionate incident. He turns out to be another fine, hearty example of the same and after a discreet interval, Andrew adopts him, bestowing on him the possibly penitent name of Christian Stace. In the meantime, our Andrew gets married, is complimented by the birth of a beautiful daughter and his wife dies. So the adopted son and the regular daughter are reared together without the slightest intimation that they have a blood-father in common.

NOW this is the sort of risk that a fairly sensible man would not take and Andrew Stace turns out to be much less worldly than his early flirtation might have indicated. He had no idea that his natural son and his legitimate daughter might come to fancy each other. However, proximity exacts its price and in his dying moments, Andrew learns of an attachment between them which must lead to marriage or worse. As he is in his last gasp, the best he can do to forestall this invitation to incest is to deposit in an old desk a letter which details the awkwardness of the situation. (There may be a moral here but it is not a denunciation of wickedness; rather it is that human beings get into trouble because they are so badly disorganized.) . . . Of course, no one bothers to open the desk with its fatal letter until 25 years have passed. In the interim, the half-brother and half-sister have married and have become the parents of two sons and a daughter, all above voting age. The discovery kills Christian. His half-sister wife survives the shock although she is quite unsettled and dies of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

something else a bit later. The incest was attended by no untoward symptoms in the children except for an impulse to talk all of the time.

Had this pesky situation occurred on our own Tobacco Road, it would have seemed pretty sordid. But happening, as it did, in a glow of British dignity, wealth and pride of ancestry, it causes, shamefully enough, a spontaneous combustion of comedy. Readers find themselves laughing at things they definitely should not laugh at.

For almost two generations, this unclassifiable lady has awed appraisers on both sides of the Atlantic: "matchless dialogue," "almost metaphysical wit," "the golden touch of perfection," "devastating lucidity," and even, "of all English novelists now writing, the greatest and most original talent." The critics could be at least half-way right.

PAPERBACK BOOKS

A Wealth from Which To Choose

When I agreed to write a monthly piece on the paperbacks for *The New Republic,* it occurred to me that I was about to become the only regular book-reviewer in America with an *embaras de riches* on his hands. There are now about 20—give or take a few—series being published, and judging from the new lists I have seen, the standard originally set by Doubleday's Anchor Books shows no sign of falling as a consequence of this glut on the market. Quite the contrary: the editors of the various series seem only to be vying with one another for superior seriousness and yet more exalted disregard of popular taste. Meridian, for example, is preparing editions of G. Wilson Knight's *The Wheel of Fire* (which in 1930 inaugurated something like a revolution in the interpretation of Shakespeare), Herbert Luethy's *France Against Herself* (perhaps the most brilliant analysis of contemporary France yet written), and major works of Berenson, Panofsky, and Troeltsch—to mention only a few. Anchor has just issued, among others, a collection of R. P. Blackmur's essays (which means that virtually every important modern literary critic can now be read in paperbacks), G. Polya's extraordinary essay in heuristic, *How To Solve It,* and John Dollard's classic sociological study, *Class and Caste in a Southern Town.* Dover's recent publications include Ferenczi's *Sex in Psychoanalysis,* a book which will introduce one of the subtlest and most original followers of Freud to a non-professional audience, and William James', *The Principles of Psychology.*

Now it is obviously impossible to keep pace with this formidable procession of difficult books in a short monthly article, but I hope to comment on two or three new titles every month, and at least to mention most of the others. Considering the range of subjects covered by the paperbacks, no single reviewer could pretend to speak with authority on more than a very few of the volumes that come out from month to month. I certainly would not presume to challenge the judgment of scholars on books like Hans Reichenbach's *The Rise of Scientific Philosophy* (California) or Ernst Troeltsch's *Christian Thought* (Meridian); what do I know about scientific philosophy or Christian thought? But I will now and then attempt to say whether such works make too great a demand on the layman, whether they can find a proper place outside the stacks of university libraries, whether they smell too strongly of the lamp to move about undetected as aliens in the marketplace of general culture. I *will,* that is, presume to speak for the educated layman whose intellectual curiosity is wide, whose ambition to learn is alive, and whose capacity to understand is reasonably sound.

Assuming that my educated layman actually exists in America (the sales of the paperbacks seem to indicate that he does) and that the intellectual world he inhabits is indeed a "marketplace of general culture" where serious books on a great variety of subjects compete for his attention, by what criteria would he make his choices? He would clearly want to read those lesser-known works of major authors that form a decent percentage of the paperback library—for example, Freud's *The Future of an Illusion,* which has just been reprinted by Anchor. He would be grateful for having Ford Madox Ford's first-rate novel, *The Good Soldier,* which has been rescued from virtual oblivion by Vintage, brought to his notice and put within easy reach. He would welcome the opportunity to get acquainted with thinkers and scholars he had always meant to read but had somehow never got around to—perhaps Cassirer or Tillich or Jesperson.

Being educated, he would already have enough Shakespeare under his belt to get a good deal out of the wonderful assortment of secondary works available in paperbacks—Traversi's *Approach to Shakespeare* (Anchor), *Van Doren's Shakespeare* (Anchor), Bradley's *Shakespearean Tragedy* (Meridian), Fluchere's *Shakespeare and the Elizabethans* (Mermaid Dramabooks), and Granville-Barker's *Preface to Hamlet* (Mermaid Dramabooks).

He could, if he were sufficiently patient with details, find pleasure and profit in W. D. Ross' *Aristotle* (Beacon) or Walter Kaufmann's *Nietszche* (Meridian), or even so esoteric a study as Louis Bredvold's *The Intellectual Milieu of John Dryden* (Ann Arbor). But I find it difficult to imagine him dipping into Halevy's monumental *The Growth of Philosophic Radicalism* (Beacon) without giving up after a few pages in sheer weariness and bewilderment—even if he has more than a passing acquaintance with the utilitarian philosophers. Halevy is simply too technical, too detailed, too arduous to be of much use to anyone not professionally concerned with the subject. Does this mean that I would recommend forgetting about Halevy? Certainly not. What harm does it do to have such a book around, to be studied when—and if—the occasion arises? But if the paperback Halevy (as distinguished from the hardcover Halevy) is claiming the attention of the educated layman rather than the scholar, if it is making a bid for success in the marketplace of general culture, then the educated layman has a right to decide whether this claim is justified. As I have said, I will presume to exert this right in his name. That is presumption enough to be getting on with.

Norman Podhoretz

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MOVIES

Murder on the Waterfront

THE *surprising thing about Edge of the City* is that it has turned out so well. This new movie is an artistic success, and from all appearances a commercial success as well. Yet the conditions under which the picture was produced and the special nature of its themes were such as to have made this success unlikely.

Consider the plot, for example: A young, highly neurotic, army deserter

Edge of the City (MGM).

gets a job in a New York freight yard by "kicking back" part of his pay to a brutal boss. The deserter is befriended by a warm and sympathetic Negro foreman. Under the impact of this friendship he thaws out and moves toward maturity. In a vicious freight-hook fight, however, the Negro is killed by the bully. After a period of cowardly indecision, the deserter finally goes after the murderer and drags him to the police.

Obviously, a plot like this is full of pitfalls for the untalented moviemaker. Of the many traps which litter it, the relationship between the two friends, the White and the Negro, is the trickiest. So far as White-Negro relationships are concerned, Hollywood has provided only two models: superior-White and Amos-and-Andy-type-Negro (*e.g., Baby Doll*), or prejudiced White and noble-but-wronged-Negro (*e.g., Lost Boundaries*).

Here, however, an entirely new pattern has been introduced. In this picture Negro and White appear as full equals, as close friends. The two men eat together, double date, visit each other's apartments, work together (with the Negro as boss)—all without a shred of self-consciousness! The relationship is entirely spontaneous and open. For the first time, Hollywood has given the Negro the role of a warm, uncomplicated and natural human being. By this simple act, *Edge of the City* will have had more beneficial impact on racial understanding than a thousand-and-one "message" pictures laboriously sermonizing on the subject.

The second danger implicit in the plot was that the picture would prove imitative of *On the Waterfront*. Both films have the same locale; both deal with freight handlers, both portray labor racketeering; both contain violence. Despite these similarities, *Edge of the City* emerges as entirely fresh and original. Basically, this is because it explores different themes than those tackled in the Kazan film.

Waterfront was essentially a film of social protest. Its chief purpose was condemnation of the waterfront rackets, as its author, Budd Schulberg himself has said in a number of articles.

The focus of *Edge of the City* is different. Here, the emphasis is clearly on individual personality, on psychological motivation. The freight yard environment (*i.e.*, the "system") is present, but merely as dramatic backdrop. It is the psychological *past* of the characters in it, not their *social present* that explains and motivates their behavior. The goal of *Waterfront* was to accuse; the goal of *Edge* is to plumb behavior, to understand. This difference has a major dramatic result: *Waterfront* tends to be a movie about social types, about the working *class; Edge of the City* is a picture about working *people*.

SENSATIONALISM was another danger to be avoided in the movie. That this temptation was put aside is due to the movie's mature concern with character motivation. Sensationalism is all surface. Once a film really explores the behavior of people, sensationalism disappears. This is the case in *Edge*. The inability of the deserter to take a stand against the bully is convincingly tied to his earlier relationship with his father and brother. The warmth and spontaneity of the Negro is persuasively placed in the context of an outgoing and healthy personality. The arrogance of the bully is rooted in deep-seated personal insecurity. The violence in the film emerges naturally from the interaction and tensions of the characters. None of it is provided for its own sake. Every action is psychologically inevitable.

But as if problems posed by the plot were not enough, *Edge of the City* was faced with other difficulties. Money certainly must have been a major issue. Obviously this movie cannot be shown in the South. The presentation of such a White-Negro relationship would violate too many frail Southern sensibilities. This meant, of course, that from the very start, the picture would be denied a major market. It also meant the producer of the film, an independent (David Susskind), would have a time for himself raising risk-capital. Though one cannot be sure, of course, it's likely he got around this problem, first, by making the movie a low budget job (just under $450,000), and second by persuading interested parties that the movie, because of its offbeat theme, would offset the Southern boycott by garnering a huge audience in the foreign market. A measure of Susskind's success is found in the impressive fact that he was able to persuade no less than MGM itself to handle distribution.

FINALLY, the movie faced a major difficulty in the fact that its talent was unknown and untried in the movie field. Actually, it is the product entirely of TV talent. The movie itself is based on a TV script, Robert Allan Arthur's *A Man Is Ten Feet Tall*. (The title was changed, incidentally, after an opinion poll found the public wouldn't buy it). The director (Martin Ritt) and Susskind himself, and all of the actors come from television.

The fact that the picture emerges as successfully as it did must be considered further proof that TV people have something Hollywood needs badly. Judging from *Edge of the City* this would seem to be nothing more than a willingness to take a chance on an original theme, artistic integrity, and a serious concern with the "whys" of human behavior.

ARTHUR S. BARRON

Notes on Contributors

RICHARD L. STROUT is a veteran Washington newsman. HAROLD WITT has recently published his first book of poems. JOSEPH P. LYFORD is a staff member of the Fund for the Republic. BASS YARLING has been a newspaper reporter, assistant to Donald Nelson on the War Production Board and claims to be the "only hog farmer on 13th Street," New York City. NORMAN PODHORETZ is an editor of *Commentary* and contributor to the *New Yorker, Partisan Review* and other periodicals. ARTHUR S. BARRON is a Soviet expert with a taste for films.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Correspondence

(*Continued from page 3*)

of the many peoples displaced by force under the same inevitability of thought. While Niebuhr skirts honesty in admitting Israel was a "mistake," he hesitates in maintaining what many Americans have accepted — that Israel is still a mistake!

True Judaism does not require Zionism and never has required it, any more than Christianity demands the establishment of a Kingdom of Heaven on earth. There are many American Jews who detest the presumptions of Zionism to speak for all Jews, but who will listen? While it is unfortunately true that Zionism as applied in Israel could not exist without the financial help of America, it does not follow that Judaism cannot exist without Zionism.

WILLIAM F. POTTER

Boston, Massachusetts

Dr. Niebuhr Replies . . .

SIRS:

EVERYONE knows that the question of Zionism is charged with emotion, and Mr. Potter seems to have more than a usual share of it. I will not try to answer the snide remarks but content myself with clarifying the original thesis. I said that the founding of the State of Israel in the Middle Eastern world was probably a mistake, though an unavoidable one, in the light of the historic factors of that time, including the necessity of founding a haven for the victims and survivors of Hitler's cruelties. Does Mr. Potter seriously challenge that fact?

The statement that Israel represents a modern technically competent civilization with a democratic order is not equivalent to asserting that "modern gadgetry is the divine in man," nor does this fantastic misinterpretation of my comparison invalidate the contrast between democratic justice in Israel and the fantastic social conditions in some of the Arab States in which oil riches have aggravated the contrast between the wealth of the sheiks and monarchs and the poverty of the miserable Bedouins who have not advanced beyond a pastoral economy.

Mr. Potter is right that "Judaism does not require the State of Israel." But that does not change the fact that a homeless nation required a homeland, particularly when the insecurities of its diaspora were heightened during the Nazi terror. Animus, particularly excessive animus against the State of Israel, seems to me to be singularly inappropriate at a time when the imperiled State, despite its straitened circumstances, is called upon to accept another hundred thousand immigrants from Eastern Europe and from Egypt. A sense of pity for the homeless, whether individuals or nations, ought really to moderate our passions and give us some sympathy for a people who have lived for centuries in insecurity and have borne the brunt of Spanish inquisition, Hitler's mania, and Nasser's hysteria.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

Union Theological Seminary

► *Hackett on Krishnamurti*

SIRS:

FRANCIS HACKETT is too shy. He says (*NR*, January 28), "It would be impossible in any short review to suggest Krishnamurti's theology, metaphysics, or theory of knowledge . . ." but he has done just that, and in one sentence: "Life in time is confusion and misery; but when that which 'is' is timeless, there is bliss." It must be all there: confusion, misery, and bliss in not being. Perhaps we should add one more thought, again part of this same "short review": "Krishnamurti is outside politics." That's putting it well, as far as it goes, but . . . Krishnamurti is outside of everything, right out of this world, in fact he's an "Outsider."

I suspect that Mr. Hackett would recognize that our Biblical heritage borrows from Hebrew tradition, just as Christianity does indeed, show influences of the Platonic philosophy. But doesn't this Hebrew tradition have a sharply contrasting view of "being"? the Self, individual personality? Hasn't Judaism anything to say about the manner and intent in our creation? and doesn't Christianity have anything to say about love? or must we leave the last word on this to Krishnamurti?

NELSON F. HINE

Pittsfield, Massachusetts

• • •

SIRS:

I was astonished to discover in my favorite journal of opinion a discussion by Francis Hackett of one Krishnamurti. I am perplexed that any one would write seriously about this fakir and more perplexed that *The New Republic* would publish it. Hackett writes of Krishnamurti in the same manner that one would write of Confucius or Plato.

EDMUND RUCKER

El Cajon, Calif.

AMERICAN SEMINAR TO EUROPE

Leader, Dr. Jerome Davis

Visiting England, France, Poland, Finland and staying a month in Russia. Cost $1650. Sailing by steamer June 19th, returning New York August 6th. Those desiring can stay longer. Professors and doctors already enrolled. The number strictly limited. Write immediately to Jerome Davis, 489 Ocean Ave., West Haven, Conn.

TO AUTHORS

seeking a publisher

Send for our free, illustrated booklet entitled **To the Author in Search of a Publisher.** Tells how we can publish, promote and distribute your book. All subjects considered. New authors welcome. Write today for booklet RP. It's free.
VANTAGE PRESS, INC., 120 W. 31 St., N. Y. 1
In Calif.: 6253 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood 28
In Wash., D. C.: 1010 Vermont Ave., N.W.

Book Bargains
FREE CATALOG
Any Book Located
Send list. No Obligation.
World Wide Book Service
525 Broadway, New York 12

AMERICAN LETTERS, Plainfield, Vermont. Francis Golffing, poetry. Alpin Murphy, prose. Published twice a year: January, June. 50c per copy. $1.00 per subscription.

$70 WEEKLY — home, spare time. Simplified mail bookkeeping. Immediate income — easy! Auditax, 34757 DA, Los Angeles 34.

BRITISH SHOES FOR GENTLEMEN at a fraction of their American retail price! $9.95 includes duty and import charges. Delivery in ten days from receipt of order. Unconditional money-back guarantee. Write for free illustrated catalogue. Steven Williams, Jr., Ltd., 40 Chatham Road, Short Hills, New Jersey.

LEARN WHILE ASLEEP: Details free. Research Association, Box 610-NR, Omaha, Nebraska.

BRITISH BOOK BARGAINS—ALL SUBJECTS. Catalogues free. Transbooks, Box 22-NR, Brooklyn 26, N. Y.

CLASSIFIED RATES

Per word (single insertion)	12c
Per word 6 times in one contract year	11c
Per word 13 times in one contract year	10c
Per word 26 times in one contract year	9c
Per word 52 times in one contract year	8c

NEW REPUBLIC
1244 NINETEENTH ST., N.W., WASH. 6, D. C.

301 N ST., N. E., WASHINGTON 2, D. C. 7
PRINTED BY NATIONAL PUBLISHING CO.,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"In the United States, the intellectuals have . . . no magazine that reaches even a fourth of them (though I hope that some day The New Republic *will reach all of them)."*

MALCOLM COWLEY in last week's *New Republic*

Many share this hope of a former editor of *The New Republic.* Through the years, most of our new readers have come to us through old friends—our regular subscribers. If you will send us the names of those you believe would enjoy this Journal, we shall be pleased to invite them to subscribe.

THE NEW REPUBLIC, 1244 19th St., N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

Please send information about *The New Republic* to the following:

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____ STATE_____

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____ STATE_____

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____ STATE_____

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____ STATE_____

*My name*_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED